

Message Text

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S E C R E T LISBON 4372

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PO

SUBJ: GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY SHUTS DOOR TO CABINET SLOT
FOR CDS, WHICH MAY WITHDRAW FROM POLITICS AS RESULT

REF: LISBON 3469

SUMMARY: APPARENTLY STYMIED IN THEIR BID FOR A CABINET-LEVEL POSITION IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT, THE CONSERVATIVE PARTIDO CENTROL DEMOCRATICO SOCIAL, LED BY COUNCIL OF STATE MEMBER FREITAS DO AMARAL, MAY BEGIN AN INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN CRITICAL OF THE IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE GOP, AND EVENTUALLY WITHDRAW FROM POLITICS CHARGING THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR MODERATE, CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE NEW REGIME. END SUMMARY.

1. SHORTLY AFTER THE SWEARING IN OF COSTA GOMES AS PORTUGAL'S NEW PRESIDENT, EMBOFFS WERE CONTACTED BY ADELINO AMARO DA

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COSTA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CENTER-RIGHT PARTIDO CENTRO DEMOCRATICO SOCIAL (CDS), IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE EVOLVING

POLITICAL SITUATION. IN THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION DA COSTA REVEALED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT HIS PARTY'S FUTURE PLANS, WHICH HE STRESSED MUST BE KEPT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

2. THE CDS, SAID DA COSTA, HAS JUST SENT A SECRET LETTER SEPT 30 TO THE PRESIDENT, THE PRIME MINISTER, AND TO THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT WHO ARE ON THE COUNCIL OF STATE IN WHICH THE PARTY MADE THREE POINTS:

A) THAT IT HAD HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE RECENT ATTEMPTS BY THE FAR RIGHT TO OVERTHROW THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND REPUDIATED SUCH ACTIONS; B) THAT THE CDS WOULD ESCHEW ALLIANCES WITH THE REMAINING FAR RIGHT GROUPS; C) THAT THE PARTY SUPPORTED THE AFM PROGRAM IN ITS ENTIRETY, UPHELD THE "REVOLUTIONARY LEGITIMACY" OF THE AFM, AND WOULD NOT SEEK TO UNDERMINE ITS EFFORTS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS. IN RETURN THE CDS REQUESTED THAT IT BE ALLOTTED A PLACE IN THE GOVERNMENT AT A SUFFICIENTLY HIGH LEVEL (THEY DESIRE A MINISTRY WITHOUT PORTFOLIO) IN ORDER TO SHOW THEM AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR MODERATE, CONSERVATIVE PARTICIPATION IN PORTUGUESE POLITICS.

3. THE CDS, SAID DA COSTA, FEELS THAT IT HAS BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AT AN OFFICIAL LEVEL, AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING NOTHING TO HELP IT GAIN ACCESS TO THE PRESS. THE FACT THAT THE CDS PRESIDENT DIOGO FREITAS DO AMARAL IS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE IS, IN THEIR VIEW, RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT THE PARTY IS NOT "FASCIST", AND THAT IT REPRESENTS AT LEAST A SEGMENT OF PUBLIC OPINION. THEREFORE THE PARTY BELIEVES THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED FROM THE CABINET. IT FEELS THAT WITH THE RECENT CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT THE NATION'S LEADERS HAVE A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW BY LETTING THEM INTO THE CABINET THAT THE NEW PORTUGAL IS DEMOCRATIC, AND THAT ALL NON-VIOLENT, DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN BUILDING A NEW DEMOCRATIC ORDER IN PORTUGAL.

4. THE CDS DIRECTORATE HAS AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING SECRET PLAN OF ACTION: IF THEY ARE REFUSED A CABINET-LEVEL POSITION

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OR IF THEY HAVE NO RESPONSE TO THEIR REQUEST BY THE END OF THIS WEEK, THEY WILL BEGIN TRAVELING THROUGHOUT EUROPE AND THE US IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN TO POLITICAL AND BUSINESS LEADERS WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PORTUGAL, EMPHASIZING THAT THE TREND OF EVENTS IS NOT TOWARDS GREATER POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING BUT TOWARDS TOTALITARIANISM. THEY WILL MAKE NO OPEN PROTESTATIONS IN PORTUGAL BUT WILL QUIETLY SPREAD THE SAME MESSAGE. THE SECOND PHASE OF THEIR PLAN WILL BE PUT INTO EFFECT ABOUT DECEMBER AND WILL ENTAIL DISSOLUTION OF THE PARTY AND VOLUNTARY EXILE

OF THE TOP LEADERS TO FRANCE, FROM WHERE THEY WILL
CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT OPENLY AND HARSHLY.

5. BY OCTOBER 4 THE CDS HAD STILL NOT RECEIVED A POSITIVE REPLY
TO ITS REQUEST. PRIME MINISTER GONCALVES CALLED IN
FREITAS DO AMARAL THAT SAME DAY TO SAY THAT THE CDS REQUEST
WAS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION BY HIM, BUT THAT OPPOSITION
HAD ARISEN FROM THE OTHER COALITION PARTIES.

6. OCTOBER 9 EDITION OF REPUBLICA CARRIES A FRONT PAGE
HEADLINE ALLEGING THAT AN INFORMANT IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
HAS DENIED "RUMORS" THAT ROOM WOULD BE MADE IN THE CABINET
(A MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO) FOR A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
CDS. ALVARO CUNHAL, LEADER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, DECLARED
IN A PRESS CONFERENCE THE SAME DAY THAT HE OPPOSED AMPLIFYING
ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT
(MDP) WAS NOT REPRESENTED IN THE CABINET.

7. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO WAY OF VERIFYING WHETHER OR NOT THE
CDS REQUEST HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY TURNED DOWN SINCE TOP CDS
LEADERS ARE OUT OF THE COUNTRY, BUT WE BELIEVE THEY PROBABLY
WERE, SINCE DA COSTA HAS FOLOWN OFF TO ROME TO DISCUSS THE
POLITICAL SITUATION WITH ITALIAN POLITICIANS. (IF TURNED
DOWN IN THEIR BID, THE CDS PLAN WAS TO BEGIN PHASE ONE OF
THEIR STRATEGY BY VISITING ITALY AND THEN THE NETHERLANDS.)

8. IN OUR VIEW REJECTION OF THE CDS BID WOULD BE ANOTHER INDICATION
OF THE LEFTWARD SHIFT IN PORTUGUESE POLITICS, AND A SIGN OF THE
STRENGTH OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH WILL PROBABLY INSIST ON
INCLUSION OF THE PCP-DOMINATED MDP IN THE CABINET BEFORE THEY
WILL ALLOW THE CS TO BE REPRESENTED. THE CDS IS THE ONLY CON-

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SERVATIVE PARTY OF ANY CONSEQUENCE LEFT IN PORTUGAL, AND ITS
DISAPPEARANCE WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IN THAT VOTERS WOULD BE LEFT
ONLY WITH A CHOICE OF CENTER-LEFT PARTIES IN THE UPCOMING
ELECTIONS. FURTHERMORE PARTY LEADERS LIKE XAVIER PINTADO AND VITOR
SA MACHADO ARE WELL CONNECTED WITH THE MODERATE ECONOMIC ELITE
HERE AND HAVE IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONTACTS. WERE
THEY TO BEGIN A CAMPAIGN IN EUROPE AGAINST THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT
AND ABANDON POLITICS AS A HOPELESS GAME, THE CHANCES FOR
SIGNIFICANT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN PORTUGAL WOULD BE LESSENED,
AND CONFIDENCE IN PORTUGAL DIMINISHED.

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